



**SUPERIOR COURT OF ARIZONA
IN MARICOPA COUNTY
TRIAL COURTS IN MARICOPA COUNTY
MEDIA RELATIONS
OLD COURTHOUSE
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FEBRUARY 9, 2006

“Committed to the Timely, Fair and Impartial Administration of Justice”

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Presiding Judge Barbara Rodriguez Mundell is Recipient of 2005 Maricopa County Diversity Champion Award

Presiding Judge Barbara Rodriguez Mundell is the first recipient of the Maricopa County Diversity Champion Award, in recognition of her dedication to impartiality and fairness to all individuals, regardless of whom they are.

“A champion is someone in an organization who makes things happen,” Supervisor Mary Rose Wilcox said, in presenting the award to Judge Mundell. Wilcox added that the judge is “very determined and passionate in what she believes in and makes sure to let you know.”

In accepting the award, Judge Mundell said, “I am extremely pleased and honored to be the first recipient of the Maricopa County Diversity Champion Award. This award acknowledges that the county values diversity and believes it is important to celebrate and embrace the richness of our various cultures and languages represented in our community.”

Judge Mundell adds: “It is the Courts’ duty to protect individual rights, regardless of a person’s skin color, gender, religion or creed. The Courts credibility and integrity is based on the public’s trust and confidence in how well the Court performs its duties,” she said. “Therefore, we need a workforce that reflects the community we serve, but more importantly, we need a workforce that respects and honors all people and their cultures.”

In 2004, Maricopa County officials hired its first Diversity Director and launched a countywide diversity program to “insure the ethnicity base of county employees is keeping pace with the county’s changing demographics of its growing and diverse community.”

Judge Mundell, upon becoming presiding judge last summer, launched a community-outreach initiative to reach out to divergent groups of Valley residents. Through a series of forums around the Valley, she has opened a dialog with people interested in sharing their concerns, opinions and suggestions about the courts.

Since mid-November, six such forums have been scheduled, in the southeast, northeast, northwest, southwest regions of the Valley, as well as in downtown Phoenix. The important message being presented is that Courts are “committed to the timely, fair and impartial administration of justice.”

Among Judge Mundell’s additional efforts to develop, expand and support cultural diversity:

- developed a plan to address cultural competency throughout the Judicial Branch in Maricopa County;
- hired a Director of Community Outreach;
- seeks improvements in hiring a culturally diverse workforce;
- endorses pay incentive of bilingual Spanish/English staff to better serve all court customers;
- seeks funds for after-hours courts in Family Court, Juvenile Court and the Justice of the Peace Courts to improve use of county funded government resources and better serve the working public;
- approved a American with Disabilities Act coordinator;
- established court programs that address cultural differences in response to positive motivators and sanctions.